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He nestled close to his father's side.

p. 21.



American Sunday-school union

SISTER MARY'S

STORIES.

NO. I.

THE KINDEST FRIEND

WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND
REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.



AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION:

1122 CHESTNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

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Note.—"SISTER MARY'S STORIES" are designed to exhibit the goodness of God in his precious gifts to man, especially in the gift of a Redeemer. For this purpose, the great truth of the *redemption of men by Jesus Christ* is fully delineated, being preceded by a series of illustrations, intended gradually to familiarize the mind to the idea of redemption, and to elicit and remove mental objections before the appeal is made to the heart. Each story is perfectly independent of the series, and may be had separately. A volume is formed of the whole, that the several illustrations of the atonement, and the various claims to gratitude, may be presented at one view.

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Chap.

THE

KINDEST FRIEND

CHAPTER I.

HENRY was a little boy who lived at home with his mother, but his father was a great way off in another place. He had gone there when Henry was a baby, so that Henry did not remember his father at all.

One day, when Henry went up to his little room where he kept all his play-things, he found six new, beautiful pictures hanging on the walls. Four were paintings of flowers, and had trees and houses in them; one was a picture of boys

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playing with a dog, and the other of girls playing with a kitten.

Henry was so surprised that he stood still by the door, looking at them; and then, instead of going in, he ran down into the parlour, and cried out, "O, mother, come and see what is in my play-room!"

She went with him, and when they had examined them all, Henry said, "Mother, who made these pretty things for me? Did you?"

"No, I did not. Why, what makes you suppose any one made them for you? Could they not come here of themselves?"

Henry looked up into his mother's face to see if she was not laughing; and said, "Now, mother, you are just making fun of me. The pictures could not paint themselves, and put themselves here.

Somebody must have made them, and sent them to me; do you not know who, mother?"

“Go, ask nurse.”

So he went and asked the nurse; but she did not know, and none of the people in the house knew. And when he came back to his mother, she only told him that they had been brought to the door, with a letter, which said that somebody had made them for Henry, and they were to be hung up in his play-room.

“But who was it that made them and sent them?” Henry still asked, yet he could not find out. He lay thinking and wondering about it, even after he had gone to bed that night, until he fell asleep.

The first thing, next morning, he ran into the play-room to look at the pictures; and there on the table

was a little pink box. He took it in his hand, and felt the nice smooth paper with which it was covered ; and then he lifted the lid, and up flew a little bird ! Henry jumped, and put the box on the table ; but he stood to watch the bird, it was so very handsome ; all over red and green feathers. And while he was looking at it, it opened its little beak, and then he heard sweet music as if it was singing. His mother came in to listen ; and she told Henry it was not a real, live bird, but only a thing very curiously made of paper, and wire, and leather, and feathers ; and that it had been sent to him by the same person that sent him the pictures.

While they were talking the music stopped all at once ; and the bird went back into the box, and the lid

shut down of itself; but when Henry lifted it, up flew the bird again, and made the same sweet music. And while he stood looking and listening, Henry said, "I wish I knew who sent you here. He must be very good; he must love me very much, to give me such beautiful, pleasant things."

But what was Henry's delight, next morning, when he found in the midst of his play-room a painted wooden horse. It was a rocking-horse, large enough for him to ride upon. He climbed up on it, with his whip in his hand, and rocked away till he was tired: and then he tried to draw it into his mother's room, to show it to her, but it was too heavy.

So he called her, and said, "Look! look! what a fine horse, mother;

and do tell me, did the same person who sent me the pictures and the bird, send me this fine horse too?"

"Yes."

"But how did he find out that I was so very fond of horses?" said Henry; "it must be somebody that knows me, and knows what I like."

His mother answered, "It is somebody who knows just what will please you."

Then Henry said, "O you know who it is. Do tell me who sends me such things."

Then his mother smiled, and said, "I will tell you. It is your father, your dear, kind father. He made the pictures, and got the bird and horse for you, and had them put here."

His mother told him that his father was coming home to them, and

would probably be there the evening of that day.

After dinner Henry was all the time running to the door or window, to see when his father was coming. At last a carriage stopped before the front door, and a gentleman jumped out of it, and ran up the steps. And in a minute he was in the house; and Henry's mother seemed so glad to see him, and he so glad to see her, that they did not take any notice of the little boy. But soon he turned round, and kissed Henry, and said, "Is this my dear son?" And then Henry threw his arms round his father's neck; for, though he had never seen him since he could remember, he loved him for sending him such beautiful things.

As soon as breakfast was over

next morning, Henry took his father into his play-room, to show him all the beautiful things in it: and he said,

“Thank you, thank you, my dear father, for making them, and putting them here where I can have them.”

Then his father said,

“Henry.”

Henry looked up.

“Do you know,” said his father, “that you have another kind friend besides me? He has made a great many more pretty and pleasant things for you; things much prettier and pleasanter than these pictures, or this bird, or this rocking-horse.”

Henry was surprised, and said. “Where, where are they? and what are they? And who is this other

kind friend? And why did he not send them here to my play-room?"

His father answered,

"He has made so many pretty things for us, that this room could not hold them if it was filled up full to the ceiling; all the house could not hold them. But some day soon I will take you with me, and show you some of them."



CHAPTER II.

ALL the time after that, Henry wanted his father to take him, and show him the beautiful things that his other kind friend had made for him; but the next day it rained, and all that week it was cloudy and chilly. But on Monday night it cleared up; and on Tuesday morning the glorious sun was seen among the thin streaks of white clouds. It shone upon the grass and flowers in the garden, and made every drop of water, hanging on them, as bright as a spark of fire.

Towards noon Henry's mother let him roll his hoop out of doors; and she let him sit with his picture books

on the porch, in the warm sun. And when his father came in, Henry looked up at him, and said,

“O how pleasant this sunshine is!”

“Yes,” said his father, “and it will dry the ground, so that I can take you, on Wednesday or Thursday, to see the beautiful things our kind friend has made for us.”

Thursday came, and it was as lovely as Monday had been; only rather warmer. When Henry's father was ready, he took him by the hand and walked out; but first he told the mother that they were going a long way, and should not be home again till late in the evening.

Henry felt so happy that he could not walk as slowly as his father. He let go his hand, and ran along before him; but presently he came

back to ask where their kind friend kept the beautiful things he had made for them.

“Are they in a great house like the church?” said he.

“No, my son. I told you that he has made so many, they could not be put into any building. You will see most of them in a wild place, out of doors.”

Soon they turned out of the road into a corn-field, and Henry ran very fast across it; far beyond it was a sloping hill, covered with grass and flowers. He soon climbed up to the top of the hill; and all around, as far as he could see, the grass was dotted with bushes of the wood-honeysuckle, or great bunches of blue violets, or yellow buttercups, and stars of Bethlehem. I should not say that these were all they

saw; for there were many, many other kinds, more than I could name to you. While Henry was pulling some, he looked round for his father, and saw him sitting quietly on a large stone, near the top of the hill. He went to him and said, "Why, father, why do you sit down? Are we going to stay here? Is this the place where our kind friend has put the beautiful things?"

His father answered, "Do you see any thing here that is pretty and pleasant?"

"O yes!" cried Henry. "Look at these flowers, father, and smell them, how sweet they are; and I have not got half the different kinds I saw.

"But look! look there!" And off he ran after a beautiful butterfly that had just flown past them.

He did not catch it, however, for he soon saw another he liked better; nor did he get that, for another and another came near him, and they were all of such bright, beautiful colours, that every one seemed more beautiful than those he had seen before. Sometimes he would climb over a fence, and while he was doing it he would lose sight of the little creature and another would appear.

He ran on and on, thinking all the time that nothing could exceed the one then before his eyes. They were yellow and brown, and some had golden spots, and all seemed full of life and joy. His long chase was likely to weary his little legs, when suddenly he stopped, and cried out,

“Father, father, do come here quickly!”

What do you think he wanted to

show him? A bird, a tiny little bird, not longer than his little finger. It was all green, except its breast, and that shone red like the fire; but as it flew about, it turned purple, and yellow, and almost all other colours. It went so fast from flower to flower, that it could scarcely be seen; and Henry asked his father why it never stopped to rest itself?

“It does stop sometimes; but not often. It has a little nest, scarcely as big as a walnut, and little eggs in it, no larger than peas; and while it is flying about, sucking honey from the flowers, another little bird, which is its mate, sits on the nest, and keeps the eggs warm, till it comes home; and then this one sits on them, and lets her go and suck honey.”

Henry looked pleased, and said,

“How beautiful it is! My bird in the box cannot fly about like this one.”

“So you have found pretty things here, then; even prettier than those I sent you?”

“Yes, a great many,” replied Henry. “You know the stream of water yonder is all full of shells and round white stones; but, father, our kind friend did not make these pretty things; for no man could make stones and flowers, and live birds and butterflies.”

“But, surely,” said his father, “they could not make themselves, and put themselves here, any more than the pictures, and bird, and horse could make themselves, and put themselves in your room. Yes, Henry, our kind friend did make all these.”

Then Henry seemed puzzled, and asked, "Is this the place you meant to show me?"

"We are going further."

So they walked a long, long way; and the sun shone brighter and brighter, and made every thing very warm. The insects and butterflies seemed all to have gone; only, now and then, one might be seen resting on a bough, with its weary wings shut up. The grass leaned over as if it was weak; the flowers closed, and curled up their leaves, and hung down their heads; and the road was all full of hot, dry dust.

Henry said, "I wish I had my tin watering-pot here, to wet the ground and water the plants."

"Never mind; perhaps our kind friend will do that for you; he can pour water on all these at once."

“Why, does he live near here? and does he know what I want? and does he know when the grass and flowers are hot and dry?”

“Yes, he knows all these things.”

After a time it began to grow dark; and then the wind blew violently; and a thick cloud was rising in the west, which grew blacker and blacker, till it covered more than half the sky; and Henry’s father took him into a house that was near them; “for,” said he, “there is going to be a thunder-storm.”

As Henry stood looking out of the window he said, “Father, what are clouds made of?”

“Of little bubbles of water.—When the sun shines on the streams and on the wet earth, it turns some of the water into steam, like what comes out of the tea-kettle, only

thinner. That steam goes up, up, up, till it gets into some cold place; and then it changes into small hollow balls of water, like soap bubbles. And very many of these get together and float about; and these are the clouds: that cloud is a great multitude of water bubbles."

"But will not the bubbles break?" said Henry.

"Yes, they will soon burst, and then you will see the water pouring down here very fast."

All at once Henry was startled by a very loud noise, and he saw a long line of bright yellow lightning shooting quickly from one end of the cloud to the other. He nestled close to his father's side, but his father said, "You need not be frightened, my boy; it will do you no harm. Was it not beautiful?"

As soon as Henry felt safe, he said, "Yes, father, it was beautiful. Did it not look something like the rockets we saw on the fourth of July?"

"A little," said his father. "But see! see now!" and Henry saw a wide flash of light, going up from the lower part of the cloud; it was first orange coloured, and then it was purple, like the young violets.

And Henry cried out, "O how very beautiful! The rockets were not half so beautiful as that."

"No: our kind friend made this lightning; and no one else can make fireworks so grand."

Down came the rain, pat, pat, pat, in large drops; and then so hard and fast it poured down, that it made the windows rattle.

Then the air grew cool and plea-

sant, and soon the flowers began to raise their heads, and to look fresh and bright.

“I told you, my son, that our kind friend would water the ground all at once.”

Henry thought his father talked very strangely; but while he was wondering at all this, the sun shone again; it shone on the rain; and they saw, bending down from the sky, long lines of most beautiful colours; streaks of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet, by the side of each other. It was a brilliant rainbow.

Henry cried out, “O this is prettier than any thing I ever saw before!”

“Then have you not seen pretty things here, things prettier than what I made? And have you not

felt pleasant things here? Our kind friend made and sent them for us."

"Is this the place, then?" said Henry.

His father answered, "We are going further."

CHAPTER III.

So, after they had eaten something, they got into an open carriage, and rode a long distance. At last they went through some woods. I mean there were trees on both sides of them; and when they looked between the trunks of the trees near the road, there were others behind, more than they could count; trees, trees, nothing but trees, as far as they could see. The ground below was covered thick with moss and bushes, and bunches of fern leaves and flowers; and the branches above were so close that they grew together, and formed a green, leafy ceiling, through which the cheerful light came softly in.

Among those branches, hundreds of happy birds were flying about, or swinging on the light boughs, as the wind rocked them forward and backward; and Henry's father told the driver to stop, that they might listen to their merry singing. You would have liked to hear them chirp and twitter, and carol long strains of sweet music; as if they were trying their best to show how glad they were to see the sun again, after the shower.

Henry sat quite still awhile, but at last he could not help exclaiming,

“I like these birds better than mine at home; for that moves in just the same way every time I open the box; and it makes only one tune; and it is not alive; but these hop and fly about, and sing for joy. Besides”——

Just then something jumped into the tree close by Henry, and made him start.



It was a little squirrel, with its bushy tail over its back, and a nut in his paw. Then he noticed that there were many squirrels, leaping about among the lower branches; and many other little animals soon came creeping from under the bushes, or out of their

holes in the ground, playing about, or running races with each other. And Henry looked over the side of the carriage, and there, close to the road, were great numbers of ants, creeping in and out of the earth, and carrying away the dirt that had been washed into their houses.

“O how many, many living things there are here! How busy they seem! how merry! Father, is it not pleasant to see things that can fly and jump and play around so?”

“Yes, it is very pleasant; but no one can make such, except our kind friend. He made all these, and keeps them here where we can watch them. He made our cat and dog and all your pets; and he lets you have them.”

By this time the driver came back. He had gone in among the trees,

while Henry and his father were listening to the birds, and he brought them a small basket full of whortleberries, which he had found growing there.

Henry's father, as he took them, said, "Here are more pleasant things that our kind friend has made, and put here for us to find."

"Then," said Henry, "I am sure he must love us. But is this the place you meant, father, where he keeps pleasant things for us?"

His father answered, "We are going a little further yet."

CHAPTER IV.



THEY rode on till they came to water,—water so wide that Henry could not see the other side of it. Here

was a large boat. It was a steam-boat; and Henry's father lifted him out of the carriage, and paid the driver, and took him on board the boat. Soon it left the land, and

went off with them over the water. They were sitting together, upon a settee, in the open part of the boat. When it grew late it was cold and dark; and Henry's father wrapped him up in his cloak, and took him on his knees. As they sat there together, talking about the darkness, Henry noticed a faint light just where the edges of the sky and water seemed to touch each other. It grew brighter and brighter; and soon the fair round moon came up, and made the clouds all white, and the waves shone as they rolled along. Henry turned round, and looking up in his father's face, cried out,

“O, I am so glad! How I love the bright moon for making it light in the night!”

His father kissed him, and said,

CHAPTER IV.

“Good news! good news!” shouted Jane, one Monday, as she came into the room, dancing, and clapping her hands.

The children stared, to see their quiet sister Jane so lively.

“Good news!” cried she again. “Our dear father has landed from the ship, and he will come home to us this week, or next.”

I should have told you that Mr. Parker was away all this time, doing some business in a country far off over the seas. John, the grown-up

brother, had been taking care of the farm for him. Many months had passed since the children had seen their father, and they were glad enough to hear that he was coming home.

All Tuesday and Wednesday Mrs. Parker and her family listened for the sound of rolling wheels, and ran out to the gate, every few minutes, to see if there was not something moving along the road. Still they heard nothing, saw nothing, for their house was in a quiet place, and very few people passed along that way. But on Thursday afternoon Thomas cried out,

“Hark! look!” and leaning over the gate he added, “Yes, I do—I do”

see a cloud of dust, far up the road yonder, and it comes nearer and nearer. And there!—is not that a horse?”

The whole family gathered round in a moment.

“Yes, and I can see wheels now,” said Jane.

“And look! look!” cried Fanny, “there is a man driving; it is a man in a wagon.”

“I wonder if your father would come in a wagon?” said Mrs. Parker.

“To be sure he would,” cried Thomas, and off he ran to meet him.

“See! see!” exclaimed Fanny, “he leans over, and looks at us. He nods his head! He beckons to

us! Yes, it is father! it is father!
And off she ran after Thomas.

“O!” exclaimed Lucy, “I wish—I wish I could see!” and she sat down on the ground, and cried aloud.

It had been a long while since she had shed tears about being blind. But her mother and Jane and all had gone before she spoke. The sound of wheels stopped; she heard her father jump out; she heard the happy voices, and the kisses; but her tears would only come faster and faster, till Mr. Parker himself, fondly lifting her up, said,

“My poor, little darling, what is the matter, now?”

Then she threw her arm round

his neck, and laid her head on his shoulder, and sobbed out,

“O, my dear, dear father, I do so want to see you!”

Lucy's sorrows never lasted long. Soon she was laughing again. But her father was grave and thoughtful all that evening; and when she climbed up on his knees to kiss him good-night, he looked long and earnestly in her face, and then said,

“It does seem to me that these eyes might see again.”

The words made them all start. Jane hurried Lucy to bed. Mrs. Parker inquired of her husband if he really supposed it possible that Lucy's sight could be restored.

“I will tell you,” answered he

“ One of the gentlemen who came over in the ship with me, is a Dr. Hutton. I had often heard of him before I met him; for he is well known abroad, and famous for his skill in curing the blind. He is a very pleasant man, too; and he used often, at table, to give us interesting accounts of persons who had recovered the use of their eyes, after having lost it for years. Many of these he had restored himself. So I told him about a dear little girl whom I had left quite well, but whom I was going home to find blind. And I showed him the letters you wrote me, mentioning how her eyes were hurt, and how much she felt the loss of them, and how

sweetly and gently she bore it all. And I asked him if he supposed she could ever be cured. He seemed to feel very much for her, and for me, and he said it was not impossible; perhaps, if it was not too late now, he might do her some good. And he said he certainly would do all he could for her, if I would bring her to him after we got home. Nay, he made me almost promise that I would bring her, that he might try to cure her."

Mr. Parker added that, "the sooner Lucy was taken to Dr. H the better; for that if any thing was to be done for her eyes, it must be done at once. So now," asked he, "what do you all think about

it? Shall I take her to him next week?"

"O, go this week," cried Fanny.

Thomas jumped up, and clapped his hands, like a crazy boy.

John looked doubtfully.

The mother tried hard to speak, and faltered out,

"O, if my darling child can but be made to see——"

But then a flood of tears, bursting forth at the thought, choked her voice, and she could say no more.

"Let us think of it till to-morrow," said Jane.

CHAPTER V.

NEXT day they all agreed that Lucy had better be taken to Dr. Hutton, and Mrs. Parker said that Jane should go with her. So on Tuesday Mr. Parker, Jane, and Lucy stepped into the wagon, and drove away.

Soon there came a letter home from them. It was short, and only said they had got safely to town. But the next one was very full. It said that they had been to see the doctor, and he had looked at Lucy's eyes, and declared it was quite

worth while to try to cure her. He would not promise to make her well, but he thought perhaps he might; and at any rate it would do her no harm. But he said Lucy would have to take medicine, and to eat but little for some time, before he should dare to do much to her eyes. And, besides, he would wish first to watch her, and to look at them often.

Mr. Parker, after procuring them lodgings at a friend's house, left the girls under Dr. H.'s care, and returned home.

Mr. and Mrs. Parker got letters from Jane very often. In one of them she wrote,

“No one could be kinder than

Dr. Hutton is to Lucy. He speaks to her and touches her as gently as possible. Yet he has to hurt her a good deal, and the poor, little thing looks weak and pale. But he seems to think that, with the help of God, he will be able to do her good."

Another letter from Jane began thus :

"O, father! mother!—the doctor has done to Lucy's eyes all he was going to do; and he says every thing is as he wished it. He will not tell me that she can see now but he hopes she soon will be able to. However, she must stay a good while yet in a dark room, with bandages tied round her head, and she must be kept quite still. But he-

fore long we shall know whether or not she is cured."

Another of Jane's letters said,

"Every day the doctor feels more and more certain that Lucy's eyes are really well again. He seems as glad as any of us; and he says he shall certainly come with us, when we return home, for he would not miss seeing our meeting for any thing. Besides, Mrs. Hutton is not very well, and he wants to bring them both into the country. So you had better have every thing ready, for I do not know how soon he may think it safe to let Lucy travel. But, dear father and mother, and brothers, and Fanny, do not be too sure about Lucy. The doctor says that, if she

were to take cold now, or if any thing were to happen to her, all would be lost—she would be blind again.

CHAPTER VI.

ONE warm evening, as they were all sitting together in front of the house, Thomas cried out,

“Hush! what is that noise?”

It was the sound of wheels rolling along the road.

They all flew to the gate. Yes, there was a carriage coming. Was it Dr. Hutton’s?

They ran to meet it. But long before they reached it a hand from its window opened the door, and out jumped Lucy, and Jane after her

“O,” cried Lucy, as she came running fearlessly towards them, and raised the blinder from her eyes “O, Thomas—Fanny, how tall you have grown!”

The next moment she was in her mother’s arms. And as Mrs. Parker exclaimed, “God bless you, my child!” Lucy said,

“I thought I never should see that sweet, kind look of your’s again.”

And then, catching a sight of her father, she cried,

“O, father, when you came home I could not see you: but now——”

And she looked long and earnestly in his face, and tears of joy fell upon her dress.

By this time Jane had come up,

and, looking up under her blinder, she said,

“What, Lucy, crying! I thought you were a happy child to-day.”

“And, O, I am!” said Lucy, “indeed I am. Mother, as we were coming home the doctor often let me look out, and then I saw the trees, and the people, and the horses, and every thing. And now here it all looks as it used to. O how good it is to be able to see!”

“But where are Dr. and Mrs. Hutton?” asked Mr. Parker.

“O,” said Jane, “they did not want to spoil our happy meeting; so they got out at the beginning of the bushy path, and came along it on the other side of the fence.”

How quickly they all went to meet them! And how the children kissed the doctor's hands, and thanked him again and again! And how fondly they led him to the house! And how they ran to get him fruit, and cake, and milk, and every thing they had! It seemed as if they could not do enough for him, since he had made Lucy able to see.

God has made you able to see, and that, too, without hurting you at all. He has made you able to hear, too, and to smell, and taste, and move, and think, and feel. He is kinder to you than Dr. Hutton was to Lucy.



"Let me feed myself. I will! I will!"

p. 18.

SISTER MARY'S STORIES.

NO. IV.

THE ORPHAN GIRL.

**WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND
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THE ORPHAN GIRL

WHEN Eliza Nevins was about six years old, her father died of the cholera; and her mother suffered herself so much, in taking care of him, that she soon after became sick, and died also.

Eliza sat by the fire, crying; for she felt, then, that she was a poor little orphan, who had no father or mother to take care of her.

Her aunt was a very poor woman but she took her home with her that night, and she went to bed early. When her uncle came in, in the evening, and found she was there, he said, "We cannot keep this little girl here; for I can hardly get money enough, every day, to buy food and clothes for my own children."

"No," said her aunt, "she must not stay here; we are too poor to keep her, and buy all she ought to have. But if we do not keep her, she will have to go without a bed, or a home, and without any thing to eat or wear; for she has no father or mother to get these things for her."

Eliza was lying awake in the bed,

for she was so sad she could not sleep; and she heard what they said. And when she thought about staying out of doors, on the cold ground, every night, and having no place to go into when the rain and snow fell, and when the sun shone hot; and being very hungry for want of something to eat, and very cold and uncomfortable for want of more clothes, she could not help crying. She wondered why she had never remembered before that it was her father and mother who used to give her such things. She did not make any noise, however, because she wanted to hear more of what they said.

“Perhaps,” said her uncle, “she

might work for some rich people, and they would give her food and clothes, to pay for what she did for them."

But her aunt answered, that "neither Eliza, nor any other child, could do enough work to pay for her lodging, food, and clothes, and all she would want."

"No," said her uncle: "that is very true. But perhaps some kind lady might let her live with her, and give her these things, if she would do all she could to help about the house, and would stay there a long while, until she grew bigger, and could be more useful."

"O," thought Eliza, "how glad I should be if some such kind, good

lady would take me home, and take care of me. I am sure I would try all I could to please her." Then she remembered that her father and mother used to let her live in their house, and give her food and clothes, and many other things, all the time; and yet she never felt thankful to them for it—never tried very much to please them. Then she cried and sobbed, until she fell asleep.

Next day her aunt went out, and when she came back, she said that she had found a lady who wanted a little girl to run on errands, and amuse her little boy, and that she wished to see Eliza. So she put on her bonnet, and went with her aunt to the house. They were shown

into a parlour, where the lady sat on the sofa, reading, and a nice little boy, about two or three years old, was playing beside her. Mrs. Gordon (for that was the lady's name) looked at Eliza, when her aunt told her that this was the girl she had spoken about. Eliza blushed and hung down her head.

But when the lady took her by the hand, and said, "Would you like to come and live with me, and play with my little son, Frank?" she answered, "Yes, ma'am;" and when she added, "If you will be a good, active girl, I will always take care of you, and make you comfortable," she peeped up into her face, and, seeing a kind smile there, she

threw her arms at once round Mrs. Gordon's neck, and said, "O yes! I will try to be good; for I love you already!"

But the lady did not seem to like this, for she gently pushed Eliza from her, and said, "You must not do so, child;" and then she sent her up stairs to take off her bonnet.

"Excuse her, ma'am, if you please," said the aunt. "She does not know the difference yet between you and an own mother."

It was not long before poor Eliza learned the difference. Mrs. Gordon made her very comfortable, and was generally mild and good to her; but she was not *affectionate*. She

never took her on her lap, and patted her head, and smoothed her hair, as her dear mother used to do; and often, when Eliza saw her stooping to play with her little boy, or leading him about to show him pretty things, or pressing him in her arms, and kissing his forehead, and cheeks, and lips, and eyes, she turned away, and cried; because she had no one who loved her so, or wanted her to love them. Her mother used to do so.

Little Frank Gordon, too, soon found out that there was a difference; for when they were alone together, Frank often behaved very badly to Eliza; took her things from her, or pushed or struck her; because he

knew that, if they quarrelled, his mother would punish her rather than him.

Little Frank had a bowl of bread and milk every evening, and Eliza fed him with it. One night he wanted to hold the spoon himself, but she would not let him, for fear he should drop the milk on his clothes. He begged her for it, but she would not give it to him.

Then he cried out, "Let me feed myself! I will! I will!"

But she answered, "No, you must not."

Then he flew into a great passion, and tried to pull the spoon away. But she held it tight; and then he began to strike at her; and in throw-

ing his arms about, he threw the bowl from the table, and spilled all the bread and milk on the floor ; and when he seized one of the pieces, to throw at Eliza, he cut his finger with the sharp edge.

The pain, and fright, and passion made him scream so loud, that Mrs. Gordon heard him in the parlour, and came running up stairs to know what was the matter. When she opened the door, there lay Frank on the floor, with his face and clothes wet and bloody, and the blood dropping from his finger.

“ Why, Frank, my son ! ” cried the mother, “ who did this ? ”

Frank stopped screaming a moment, and, pointing to Eliza, sobbed

out, "She would not let me have my spoon. She tried to keep it."

Mrs. Gordon turned round, and, seeing the little girl all pale and trembling, with the spoon and a piece of the bowl yet in her hands, she caught her by the arm, and shook her severely.

"Is this what I keep you here for, you wicked child? To throw such a little boy down, and cut his hands?" And then she boxed her ears. And when Eliza got breath to say, "I did not, ma'am; I only wanted to feed him;" she replied, "Hold your tongue, you naughty girl; and go and bring me the house-cloth; and think yourself well off if I do not tell Mr. Gordon of you

and have you severely whipped for this."

Frank and Eliza were a good deal alike about some things. They both wanted to know every thing and they noticed all they saw, and asked a great many questions.

Mrs. Gordon wished Frank to learn; and she would often lay aside her work to answer him, and make him understand. But when Eliza asked questions, she almost always said she was too busy to tell her then, and she had better go on with her work, and not stop to talk. And then Eliza wished she had a father or mother, who would listen to what she had to say, and tell her things.

Though it was very good for Frank and Eliza to want to know all that it was proper for them to know, they had a curiosity that sometimes led them into mischief. They would open baskets, or boxes, or drawers, to see what was in them, and would take things into their hands, and turn them over, and examine them. This was wrong and troublesome.

Mrs. Gordon did not want Frank to indulge this idle curiosity. She knew that all such ways would bring him into sorrow and trouble. So she tried to make him leave them off. She watched him; and whenever she found him opening baskets, or taking things into his hands, with-

out first asking whether he might do so, she punished him. The punishment was gentle, but it came *every time* he did wrong; and after a while he learned to see things without peeping into them, or taking hold of them. His mother cured him of the fault of meddling.

But Mrs. Gordon did not take all this trouble to make Eliza leave it off. It is very inconvenient, and very tiresome, to watch a child all the time, and, whenever it does wrong, to leave what we are at, and ask all about it, and punish it rightly. No one will take all this pains, except a kind parent, who really loves the child, and wants to make it good, and useful,

and happy. Mrs. Gordon was not Eliza's mother, so she would not do it for her. She let her do pretty much as she pleased, except when what she did was disagreeable to her, or Mr. Gordon, or Frank; and then she chastised her very severely. I think she was wrong. She ought to have taken pains to teach Eliza, and train her up in the way she should go. We should do good to all, as we have opportunity. Gal. vi. 10.

I will show you how I mean. Eliza lost her needle one morning, when she was sewing. Mrs. Gordon told her to go into another room, and get one out of the drawer of her work-table. She was gone a great

while, and Mrs. Gordon went in to see what she was about. She found her at the work-table, so busy in taking out and looking at the things, that she did not hear her at all till she spoke.

“What are you about there, Eliza? I told you to get needles out of the drawer, not to open the upper part of the work-table.”

“I just wanted to see what was in it,” stammered the child.

“And so you have unpacked all the work and papers, which I fixed so nicely this very morning; and here they lie, all unfolded and thrown about the floor. How often have I told you that you should not handle what does not belong to you? Go

up stairs, now, and get into bed ; not a mouthful of supper shall you have to-night, nor shall you leave your room till to-morrow ; and, mind what I say, whenever I see you touch any thing of mine, without first asking whether you may, I will send you to bed, however early it may be."

Eliza obeyed. She went up stairs, crying, and thinking that Mrs. Gordon was very cruel.

However, as she did not find it pleasant to lie awake, and to have no tea, she thought she would not meddle with other people's things again.

But early the next morning Mrs. Gordon sent her into the kitchen to

shell peas And on the table stood a covered basket; and Eliza could not help lifting the lid, and slipping in her hand, to feel what was inside. And while she had her hand full of some cherries that she had pulled out, Mrs. Gordon came down, and saw her. Eliza threw them back into the basket, and walked away very quickly; and Mrs. Gordon, because she wanted her to shell the peas, pretended not to have noticed that she was touching her cherries, and did not send her to bed. She would have done differently with Frank.

Then Eliza was not afraid to meddle again, for she saw that she should not be punished every time she did

so. And so she did not get cured of this fault, which had already brought her into so much pain; for she had no kind father and mother, who really cared very much about making her a good girl.

Perhaps some of you think it was a fine thing for Eliza to get off sometimes, without being punished, when she did wrong. But no: it was very bad for her. She went on, looking into other people's closets and boxes; and soon she began to wish for the nice things she saw there; and before long she began to take them, and to eat, or hide them.

Yes, she began to steal. And as Mrs. Gordon treated this fault as she did the other, sometimes whip-

ping her for it, and sometimes only scolding her a little, just as it suited her own convenience; she grew worse and worse; till at last they had to lock up every thing that she could reach.

Mrs. Gordon was going out one evening, and the carriage came for her before she was quite ready; and she hurried away, leaving her lamp burning, and her bag hanging on the back of a chair.

When she was gone, Eliza went into her room, and, seeing the bag, she opened it, and found a large bunch of keys there. How pleased she was! for now she could unlock the drawers, and see what Mrs. Gordon always kept there.

She went to a large bureau, and opened the lowest drawer. It was full of beautiful caps, and ribands, and chains, and flowers, which Mrs Gordon wore, when she visited or had company. Eliza took them out, and tried them on, for she knew that everybody was busy down stairs, and Frank had gone to bed. However, she put each one back in its own place, for fear Mrs. Gordon should know that she had been at the drawer.

At last, under a pile of gloves, in one corner, she found a flat red box, or case. It opened like a book, but the edges were clasped together. She managed to undo the clasp; and there, inside, lay a picture, a

beautiful picture of a young girl; and all round the edge of it were little shining pink stones. Eliza was sure she had never seen any thing so handsome. She held it close to the lamp, and moved it to make the stones sparkle; and she looked at the sweet face, and thought, "What a shame it is to keep this pretty picture shut up here in this case, under this pile of gloves, in this drawer. I think I had a great deal better have it in my room, and look at it every day."

And after gazing on it a little longer, she took it out, and clasped the case again, put it back where she had found it, and locking the drawer, threw the keys into the bag

on the back of the chair, and then ran into her own room, and hid the picture there, between her mattress and the sacking of her bedstead. O, if she had only had a faithful father and mother, to teach her, *at first*, not to *meddle*, I do not think she would ever have been so wicked as to *steal* in this way.

Nobody knew of it, and nothing was said about it, for many days. But one Thursday the stage stopped at the door, and a lady came, whom Mrs. Gordon seemed very glad to see. She had come from another place, a great way off, and was to stay a week or more.

After a while she and Mrs. Gor-

don sat down together, to sew and talk. And Eliza heard all they said, for she was seated on a stool, in the corner of the room, doing her needlework. They spoke of things which had happened when they were young, and of persons whom they loved, but never expected to meet again ; and they had much to say about a cousin of Mrs. Gordon's, who was very dear to both, but who had been dead some time.

“Did you ever see the picture she gave me?” asked Mrs. Gordon. “It is a small likeness of herself, set in rubies. I used to wear it always ; but since she died I have kept it in a corner of one of my drawers, for I

never can look at it without deep sorrow. I will bring it down, now-ever, that you may see it."

How do you think Eliza felt when she saw Mrs. Gordon go up stairs to get the picture?

Very soon she came down with the case. She unclasped and opened it; but there was nothing in it. She started back as if she was frightened.

"Why! how can this be?" exclaimed she. "It has been lying in my riband-drawer, the key of which I always carry in my own bag. It is very astonishing."

Mrs. Gordon immediately searched all her bureaus and closets, and asked every one in the house whe-

ther they had seen the picture, or knew where it was. But they all said, "No," and Eliza among them, though she knew all the time that it lay under her mattrass. But people that steal are always ready to lie, to save themselves from being found out.

Eliza's lie did her no good, however; for the very next morning, when the chambermaid was cleaning the closet in Eliza's chamber, she found the lost picture, in one corner, under some old newspapers. Eliza had put it there, when she went to bed, the evening before.

She was standing by Mrs. Gordon, when the chambermaid brought it, and told where she had found it.

Eliza felt so guilty and ashamed, that her head dropped upon her bosom, and she could not say a word.

What a heavy load a guilty conscience is, and how hard it is to conceal our guilt even from man's eye! How much better to confess a fault at once, and never be guilty of it again! They who confess and forsake their sins are sure to find mercy.—Prov. xxviii. 13.

O, how angry Mrs. Gordon was! She was more angry with her, than sorry for her. A mother would have felt more sorrow than anger. She sent her into a closet, and kept her there, till Mr. Gordon came home to dinner. And then she told him that

the child was such a thief, and such a liar, that she would not have her in the house any longer. She was sure she never would be a good girl and she would not take any more trouble about her.

So she tied up her clothes in a bundle, and Mr. Gordon took her to her uncle's house, and told him he would not keep her, for she was a thief and a liar. Her uncle said, "Then I do not want her to live in my family, and teach my children to steal and lie."

And when her aunt tried to find some other lady who would take her, they all asked whether she was a good child; and when they were told that she was sometimes meddle-

some, and mischievous, and would take things that did not belong to her, they said they would not be troubled with such a bad girl, and would have nothing to do with her.

So I do not know where she went, or what became of her ; for she had no father or mother. If her own parents had been alive, do you think they would ever have sent her away, and left off trying to make her good and happy ? O no ! they would still have taken care of her ; and if she was wicked, they would only have tried the more to correct her bad ways.

Would you like to be an orphan, like Eliza ? Surely not ; and I suppose you are not. I suppose you

have a kind father or mother, or perhaps both father and mother. God made them, and made them to be *your* parents; and he keeps them alive for you, and gives you a home in their house.

Do you think of him, and of his goodness to you? and do you try to love, and serve, and please him? Great as his mercy is, in giving you kind parents, this is not all that he has done for you; he has been kind to you in many other ways also. What have you done in return?





The lion jumped toward him.

**MY SISTER MARY'S
STORIES.**

NO. V.

REDEMPTION.

**WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND
REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.**

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Note.—"SISTER MARY'S STORIES" are designed to exhibit the goodness of God in his precious gifts to man, especially in the gift of a Redeemer. For this purpose the great truth of the *redemption of men by Jesus Christ* is fully delineated; being preceded by a series of illustrations, intended gradually to familiarize the mind to the idea of redemption, and to elicit and remove mental objections before the appeal is made to the heart. Each story is perfectly independent of the series, and may be had separately. A volume is formed of the whole, that the several illustrations of the atonement, and the various claims to gratitude, may be presented at one view.

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REDEMPTION.



CHAPTER I.

SOLDIERS! soldiers! While they march along in rows, how the drums beat! How the feathers wave! Would not you like to be a soldier?

Ah! soldiers often have to fight! They must leave their homes and all they have, to go out and kill one another. They must march on through heat and cold, through rain and snow. They must often sleep on the hard ground and in the damp night

air. And when they meet the men they are to fight, they must hurt and murder as many as they can. And while doing so, many of themselves will be torn, and cut, and bruised; and many will come back blind, or lame, or miserable for life. Would you like to be a soldier?

Ah! but you say our soldiers do not have to fight.—Yes, some do now, and all may have to fight soon. Some years ago there was a great deal of fighting in many parts of this country. There was war here. I mean many soldiers were going about, killing one another, and taking the people's bread, driving away their cattle, and burning their houses. And many persons were then forced

to be soldiers, who did not wish to do such things at all.

There was a man, then, named William Bond. He was an industrious sober man, and he had a kind pleasant wife, and two dear little children. He lived with them in a small but pretty house, whose walls were nearly covered over with roses and honeysuckles. It stood in the middle of a large garden; and William used to dig this garden, and raise potatoes, and beans, and peas, and other vegetables in it; and he used to take them to market, and sell them. Then he would often buy clothes or other useful things with the money, and take them home to his wife and children; and when

they heard him coming, they would run out to meet him, and kiss him.

But one day William brought home bad news.

The governor had ordered, that from every town in the state twenty-five men should go into the army. And so all the white men in or near the place where William Bond lived, had to go on a certain day to the town hall, that twenty-five of them might be chosen to be soldiers. At the right time they all met together there, and William among the rest; and their names were written on a piece of paper. There were two hundred and fifty-one of them.

Then the officer who was to see them rightly chosen took a box, and

put into it two hundred and fifty-one beans, all white except twenty-five. Twenty-five of them were black. This box was passed round among the men, and each person had to take out one bean. The box was held so high that no one could see into it, or know what kind of bean he was taking. Those who got the black ones had to be the soldiers.

William Bond got a black bean! He felt very sorry. He loved his wife and children very much, and he could not bear to think of leaving them, and when he went home and told them that after ten days he must march away, O how they cried!

William was beloved by all the

neighbours; and when it was told that he was to be one of the soldiers, many came to cheer his family, and promised to take care of them while he was gone. Some of them went to the officer, and asked him if they could do any thing to save William Bond from going.

He said there must be twenty-five soldiers; but if some one would *redeem* William, he might stay. He meant if some one would go instead of him, he need not go; that would do as well.

But the men all shook their heads and turned away; no one liked to redeem him.

Time rolled quickly away. The last evening came. Next day the

soldiers were to be marched off. All that week William had been trying to find some one to redeem him ; but no ! Others had homes too, and did not choose to leave them. So now he sat down by his own fireside, to spend the few remaining hours with his dear wife and children. He told his wife how to manage their garden, and what to do with the children ; and he put into her hands all the money he had collected, to buy food and clothing with it for herself and her little ones. And he asked her to pray for him, that God might take care of him, and bring him safely home once more.

In the midst of their sighs and

tears, they heard a loud knock at the door. It opened, and in came Robert Lee. Robert was William's best friend.

He walked up to him, and shaking his hand warmly, said, "Come, William, cheer up; I am going to-morrow instead of you."

William looked in his face, as though he scarcely believed him.

"Yes," said Robert, "I have just got my father and mother to say I may go. Ever since you drew the black bean I have been wanting to do this for you; but my parents were not willing. But I have told them that I have no wife or children to love or to leave, that they have

other sons besides me, and that you can be more useful at home than I can. So at last they have consented. My pack is all ready, and I will start to-morrow with the other men, instead of you."

William could not help throwing his arms round Robert's neck; and his wife and children were so glad they hardly knew what they said or did.

The next day Robert marched with the rest of the company, to join the army. And William Bond was left in his happy home, for Robert had redeemed him.

Robert was a redeemer. He gave up his home, and went into all the hardships and dangers of war, that

his friend, William Bond, might stay with his family in peace and happiness.



CHAPTER II.

‘O, FATHER,’ cried Matilda Robbins, “a man has come to our town, who has brought such a beautiful show! It is a picture; a large picture, that covers all one side of a room; and the men and women painted in it are as large as real persons. And, father, he lets people come and see it, if they will pay him a quarter of a dollar apiece.”

“And you want me to give you a quarter of a dollar, I suppose, that you may pay it to the man, and go

in and see the show? Is that what you want?" said her father.

"O, yes ; if you please, father."

Then Mr. Robbins called his three children, John, and Helen, and Matilda, and gave each one a quarter of a dollar to pay the man, and told them to keep it till afternoon, and then he would go with them to the room where the picture was exhibited.

Matilda was so delighted that she could scarcely mind her lessons that morning ; and, the minute school was done, she took her ball, and ran out to play with it against the side of the house.

"O, do not throw it there," said Helen ; "you know father said we

must not. He said we must go into the field, or by the garden wall, when we wanted to throw the ball."

But Matilda was in the midst of a fine game, and she would not stop. She threw it, and threw it; and at last, crash! went the ball through a window. It broke the pane of glass all to pieces.

Matilda was frightened. She stood still. Her father ran out to see what was the matter.

"Matilda," said he, "did you not know that I had said you should not throw your ball against the house?"

"Yes, sir."

"And yet you did it. Well, you will be punished. The window

must be mended; and, since you broke it, you must pay for mending it. We cannot get a new pane of glass without giving at least a quarter of a dollar for it; and you must take your quarter of a dollar, which I gave you for the picture, and pay it for the new pane of glass. Then you will have no money to pay for a ticket; so you must stay at home, when John, and Helen, and I go to see the picture."

Matilda knew this was just, and she had not a word to say. So she went and sat down under a tree, and began to cry. Helen stood looking at her, and felt very sorry for her. Their father walked away; but soon Helen ran after him.

“Well, Helen,” said he, “what do you want?”

“O, father,” cried Helen, “may I pay my quarter of a dollar, for the new glass, and stay at home this afternoon, instead of Matilda; so that Matilda may go to see the picture?”

“Why, Helen,” said he, “I meant to punish Matilda in that way, for not minding me.”

“Well,” answered Helen, “but let me be punished, this time, instead of her; and I am sure she will not disobey you any more.”

“Do as you choose,” said her father.

So he called Matilda to them, and said, “Your sister Helen is going to bear your punishment for you; she

is going to pay her quarter of a dollar, to mend the window you broke; and then she will have to stay at home, this afternoon, instead of you, and you can go and see the picture.”

So Matilda kept her money, and when afternoon came, she went to see the picture with it; and Helen stayed at home, and had the glass mended.

So Helen was a *redeemer*, for she bore Matilda's punishment in her place.

CHAPTER III.

A CERTAIN king had many soldiers. He had also many forts, or strong buildings; and he kept some of his soldiers in these forts, to take care of them for him. But the soldiers did not like him much; and they sent letters to one another, and all agreed that they would not obey him, or have him for their king, but would give the forts to another general. One of these letters was found by a servant of the king, and taken to him.

Immediately he ordered out a great number of men, who, he knew,

would fight for him; and he led them quickly to the nearest fort, and placed them all around it, before the soldiers within had time to hear that he was on the way.

Then he sent word to the soldiers to come out to him, and promise to obey him, and he would treat them kindly. But they only made sport of his messages.

So he ordered his men to fight them. The banners waved; the trumpets sounded; the cannons were fired, and the great iron balls beat against the walls of the fort, and went through to the inside.

At last the walls broke in many places, and fell down, and the king's men climbed up, and rushed

through, with drawn swords. They would soon have killed all the soldiers; but the king cried out to them to stop, and not to kill them, but to take their weapons from them, and keep them together where he could speak to them.

It was done; and he rode up to them, and said, "Soldiers, I do not wish you to be put to death. Yet, were I now to let you go unhurt, those in the other forts would dare to fight against me as you have done. I must punish you so severely, that they will be afraid to disobey me. This, then, shall be done to you: to-morrow morning one man, of every ten among you, shall be shot dead."

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Was not that an awful night to these soldiers? They all knew that some of them must die as soon as the day came again; and no one could tell whether it would not be himself.

Among those soldiers were an old man and his son. The old man was yet strong and healthy, but his hair was long, and white as snow. His son was young, and full of life. They both sat, sad and silent: each feared, not for himself, but for the other.

“Father,” said the son, “whatever happens to-morrow, keep close to me.”

The light began to peep in through the cracks of the shattered

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walls. Never before were the soldiers so sorry to see the light. They were marched out into a field. The men who were to shoot them were there all ready for the dreadful work.

The poor fellows stood one behind another, in a long row, and then they were made to walk before the band of soldiers.

As they passed they were counted, "one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, TEN;" and, at the word "ten," the guns were fired, and the man who was going by, at that word, was shot dead.

Again they counted, "one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine;"—the next was the old man.

But just as he was stepping forward, and they were going to say, "TEN," his son, who stood behind him, pulled him back, jumped into his place, and was instantly shot in his stead. Then the old man passed safely by, for his son had died for him.

So his son was a redeemer.

CHAPTER IV.

THERE was once a father, who had a very large family; for he was so fond of making people happy, that he had taken a great many poor orphans to live with him, and be as his children; and they all called him "father." He was very good and very kind to them, and was always doing things to give them pleasure. He had a fine, large house, in the midst of fields and gardens; and in these he let the boys and girls work and play.

One day he called them all up to

a high window, and showed them the different places where he was going to send them to labour that day.

“And you,” he said to two or three boys, who were brothers, “you go to the garden, you see there, with a strong wall on one side. That wall is to keep out the robbers, and the wild beasts; for there the garden reaches to the end of my grounds; and the wild country, outside, is full of fierce creatures. You will be quite safe, however, as long as you stay in the garden; but be careful not to open the gate in the wall; for I know there is a ferocious lion prowling about, looking for

some one to devour; and, if you once open the gate, he will surely come in among you."

The brothers promised not to open it, and they went to their place by another road. They worked there pleasantly enough, for the weather was fine, and they helped one another.

But, after a while, they began to grow weary, and sat down by the strong wall to rest themselves.

"I wonder what kind of place that is, on the other side," said one

"Well," said another, "I thought the wild country, there, looked very beautiful when we were at the high window, this morning."

"Yes," said another; "but we

were told there are fierce, wild beasts there, you know."

"Any how," said a fourth, "we have not heard any roaring, have we?"

"No," said one of them: "and I guess the lion cannot be very near, or we should have heard him."

"But father said, he knew there was one there," said another.

"But he did not say he had seen him," answered the first; "and, for my part, I do not believe there is any lion there."

"I think there is," said another.

And they disputed about it till, at last, they grew so curious to know, that they resolved to open the gate a very little and peep out. So one

boy unlatched it, and moved it just enough to get his head out; but the others crowded after, to look too, and pushed it a little more, and a little more; till at last they made it fly wide open. Then the first got in a great passion, and struck the second, and he struck back, and the rest joined in, some for one, and some for the other; till, at length, they all seized their garden-tools, and fought furiously.

Suddenly one of them dropped his spade, and, with a scream of horror, pointed through the opening in the wall. They looked; and there, on the edge of the hill beyond, stood the fierce lion! His tail was raised; his head was down;

his eyes were fixed upon them ; he was all ready to leap towards them.

They ran to shut the gate ; but, tired and wounded as they were, by their quarrel, they could not shut it

The lion jumped to the bottom of the hill ; with great leaps he came across the plain ; they had only just time to run and hide themselves before he bounded through the gateway into the garden. There he stood a moment, shaking his bushy tail, and rolling his fiery eyes towards the place where the frightened boys were concealed. Then, when he could not see them, he ran furiously forwards and backwards, all over the garden, trampling down plants and bushes, and crushing to

pieces the tools, and watering-pots, and every thing that came in his way ; till the once beautiful and fruitful spot was changed into a ruined waste.

Wearied, at length, he stretched himself on the ground, inside of the gateway. The boys had hidden themselves on the outside of the wall. They crept softly along there, trembling as they went, for fear some other wild beast should rush upon them ; and when they reached the house of their father, they did not dare to ask to be let in.

From his high window their father had seen all that had happened.

Now what do you think he ought to do to those bad boys? How

ought he to treat them? Should he call them his dear children, and kiss them, and give them a nice supper, and good bed? Should he be as pleasant to them as to the good boys, who had been quietly working all day where he had sent them? O no! that would never do; for then no one would know that such wicked conduct displeased him; no one would be afraid to do as they had done. He must show his displeasure. He must punish them.

This is what he was thinking of as he sat by his window. But he felt sorry for the boys, and did not want to punish them. "Yet," said he to himself, "the rule of the house is, that every one who is not willing to

obey, and live peaceably, must leave us. These boys have been idle, disobedient, and quarrelsome, and must be sent away. But I cannot bear to give them up. They have no other happy home to which they can go. If I drive them away from my house, they will wander in the wild country, and be caught and torn to pieces by the fierce beasts of prey there. But what else can I do? How can they be saved from this misery, which they have brought upon themselves? There is, indeed, one way in which they can be saved. If any one will suffer punishment, instead of them, they may be forgiven. But who

will do such a thing for such wicked children?"

When all the good children had come together, at supper-time, the father sent for the wicked boys, and told, before the whole family, what they had done. He told them, too, that he could not let such conduct go unpunished; that the law of the house was, that those who did such things should be turned away, as unworthy to live there; and that they must go on the next Thursday, unless some one would suffer the punishment for them. Every face was sorrowful;—but no one spoke.

From that time till Thursday, all

were talking about the unhappy boys who were to be sent away; but none were willing to be punished for them. None offered to redeem them, the punishment was so severe.

Q

CHAPTER V.

THURSDAY came; and early in the morning the children met in the great breakfast-hall. The father sat on his large chair. The bad boys stood near him. All were waiting to hear him say, "Go from me, you wicked children, and never come to this house again."

He rose up, and said to them, "Unhappy boys, you shall not be driven away. I myself will be your redeemer. I will be punished for you all."

The children looked at one another, and with one voice they cried out,

“O, no! no! father; you must not go from here, and stay away. What would become of us?”

“True,” he answered, “I cannot be punished *in that way*; but still *I will suffer for their bad conduct*. I will go into the ruined garden, and there I will labour, day and night, in the rain and in the sunshine, till I have cleared the walks, and dug the beds, tied up the fruit trees, and planted new flowers, and made it useful and beautiful again. The fierce lion is there: he will try to kill me, and I shall have to fight him. I know that I shall drive him out; but he will tear and hurt me dreadfully. This is what I will suffer myself for these boys, who de-

serve to suffer for the wicked things they did. *In this way I will redeem them.*"

So saying, he came down from his great chair, took off his own dress, and put on such clothes as the boys commonly wore to work in. Then he went into the garden, and began to put it in order.

This was very hard work; and he toiled and laboured at it alone. The children were watching him from the windows. Why did they not go and help him? They might not; for he was suffering for the wickedness of the bad boys. But how do you think they felt?

He dug, and ploughed, and raked,

and laboured there, hour after hour. The wind blew. The thunderstorm beat on him. When it cleared up the hot sun shone. But still he laboured, till he grew so weary that he fainted away. Then some of the good children ran with water to refresh him. But no sooner did he open his eyes, and move, than the lion jumped towards him. The father stood still, and let him come; but when the enraged animal leaped, and tried to kill him, he caught him by the head, and plunged a knife into his breast. The savage beast fought fiercely, tearing with his great teeth and claws. But he was so much wounded, that, after a few

minutes, he turned and crawled out of the garden ; and the father shut the gate. But then, O then, he himself fell bleeding on the ground, he was so very much hurt.

What a time of sadness was that, when the kind father lay in the garden still and cold, as though he were dead !

“ Surely he will get well, and come back to us,” said the children. “ O then, after this, we shall never dare to do wrong ; for we know now that he will not let wickedness go without being punished. Rather than do that, he has suffered for it himself.”

“ Ah !” said the wicked boys, as the tears ran down their cheeks

‘has he borne all this for us that we might be forgiven? O how he must have loved us! If he will only come back to us, we will never, no, never, disobey him again. We will try in every way to please and honour him. But, after all, we never can do enough to repay him for such kindness.’”

The father did get well. Slowly he rose from the ground; and when the children saw it, how quickly they flew to meet him, and lead him back to the house!

The wicked brothers, too, came, weeping, and knelt down before him. He kissed them, and told them they were forgiven. And after that, they all lived very hap-

pily together : for their father had redeemed the bad ones ; he had suffered for their wickedness instead of them

Do you know you are a bad child too ? You are. God is your kind, heavenly Father ; and you have often told lies, or been in a passion, or done something you know he does not like. So he must be displeased with you. He must punish you. He will punish you by sending you to a dreadful hell ; a place of torment, inhabited by the devil and his angels. He will send you there, *unless some one redeems you*. But if some one suffers, or if some one has suffered, instead of you, for the sinful things you have done, God can forgive you. Has any one

suffered for you? Has any one redeemed you? Is there a Redeemer for the sinful children of men? If there is, will you not have him for *your* Redeemer? Will you not ask to be saved because of what he has suffered? Will you not love him, and do whatever he wants you to do?



They caught up their little babe, and turned away from
their home.

SISTER MARY'S STORIES.

NO. VI.

THE WONDERFUL REDEEMER.

WRITTEN FOR THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION, AND
REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION:
1122 CHESTNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

NOTE.—“SISTER MARY’S STORIES” are designed to exhibit the goodness of God in his precious gifts to man, especially in the gift of a Redeemer. For this purpose, the great truth of the *redemption of men by Jesus Christ* is fully delineated; being preceded by a series of illustrations, intended gradually to familiarize the mind to the idea of redemption, and to elicit and remove mental objections before the appeal is made to the heart. Each story is perfectly independent of the series, and may be had separately. A volume is formed of the whole, that the several illustrations of the atonement, and the various claims to gratitude, may be presented at one view.

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THE WONDERFUL REDEEMER

CHAPTER I.

YES, God has given us a Redeemer; one who has redeemed us from hell — from eternal punishment — by suffering himself for our wickedness. Read on, and you will know.

It was night, and all were sleeping, when Joseph and his wife, Mary, suddenly caught up their little babe, and hurried away from their home. Quickly and quietly they passed

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along the streets; and when they reached the fields and woods they still travelled on, looking back every little while, as if afraid that some one would see or follow them.

And why did they leave their house in such haste? What was the matter? Had they done any thing wrong, to make them think that they were pursued as thieves and robbers are, and that their safety was in flight? Oh no.

They had just been told that a wicked king, who had many soldiers, wanted to kill their dear child; so they were carrying it away, as fast as they could, out of the reach of this cruel king.

The king did not know that they

were gone. He sent his soldiers to the town where their house stood ; and, to make sure of killing Joseph's child, they killed all the children they could find, who were not more than two years old. But Mary's baby was now far away, and safe. The wicked king never found it. It lived, and grew up. Its name was Jesus. (See Matt. ii. 13—23.)

Years after this, Joseph and Mary were seen travelling again, with hurried steps, and in great fear and sorrow.

And what was the matter at this time ?

They had lost their dear son. How did that happen ? They had taken him with them to a great

town, filled with a crowd of people. He was now ten or twelve years of age, and could be trusted by himself. When they had finished their visit in the great city, they set off to go home. Many of their friends and cousins went the same way; and Joseph and Mary supposed that their son was among them.

But when it began to grow dark, they looked around for him, and did not see him. They asked all their friends and fellow-travellers where he was. But none of them knew.

In great fear and distress, they turned about, and went back to the large town, to try to find him there, supposing he had stayed behind. They passed from house to house;

they looked up and down the streets. But Jesus was not in any of them.

At last they came to the temple, or the great church. It had a very large, wide porch. There the old men, and the wise men, of the city and country, used to meet together, from time to time, to tell each other what they knew, and to ask each other hard questions in religion and science.

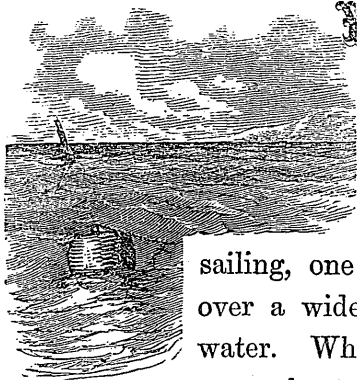
These old and wise men were sitting there, when Joseph and Mary came near. But none of them were speaking. They were all listening to a child, a boy twelve years old, who was answering one of the very hardest questions. And when he

had done answering, he asked them some which quite perplexed them; so that they wondered very much, and said to one another, "What wisdom has this child! Whence could he have learned these things?"

But Joseph and Mary scarcely heard that. They were so full of joy when they saw the boy; for he was their son,—their own lost child. Yes, it was Jesus!

He had stayed in the city to do something that God had told him to do there. But that was now finished, and he went home with his parents, and minded them always. He never did wrong. (See Luke ii. 41—52. 1 Pet. ii. 22)

CHAPTER II.



YEARS
after
this, a
large
boat
was

sailing, one evening,
over a wide lake of
water. When it had
gone about half-way
across, the wind began to blow hard ;
the sky grew dark ; the rain fell ;
the lightning flashed ; the thunder

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roared; the waters raged, and tossed the boat about.

The people in it tried to bring it near the land; but they could not manage it at all. They thought it would break to pieces, and let them fall and sink in the waters. They were dreadfully frightened.

One man, all this time, lay sleeping there on a pillow. They waked him up, crying to him, "Lord, save us, we perish;" help us, we shall all be drowned. He awaked. But he was not afraid. He calmly stood up, and spoke to the wild wind and dashing waters. He said to them, "Peace; be still."

And the wind stopped blowing; the water became smooth and quiet

as the clear blue sky. The boat was tossed no more; the men easily rowed it to the land, and all stepped safely out upon the firm, dry ground. (See Matt. viii. 23—27.)

And who was this that commanded the winds and water, and they obeyed him? *It was Jesus.*

Two sisters, named Mary and Martha, had a brother, named Lazarus, whom they loved very much. Jesus loved him too, and went often to see him. But Lazarus was taken sick. He grew worse and worse, and the physicians could not do him any good.

Mary and Martha were very anxious about him; and as they sat

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up with him, night after night, and saw him growing paler and weaker all the time, they often said to one another, “O, I wish Jesus was here : if he was here, he would make our dear brother well again.”

But Jesus was not there, and Lazarus died. His soul went away, and his body lay cold and stiff, and could not see, nor hear, nor feel, nor move. They carried it out, and buried it in a great cave, or hole, in a rock, and closed up the opening with a large stone.

Poor Martha and Mary were so grieved and sad, that, for four days after their brother was buried, they did little else but mourn and cry. Many of their friends came to them

to comfort them ; — but still they wept.

On the fourth day, as Mary was sitting in the house, Martha came in, and whispered to her. She got up quickly, and went out. The people around supposed she was going to her brother's grave, to weep there ; and they followed her. But no ! Martha had told her that a kind friend of their's was coming, and wished to see her ; and she hastened out to meet him.

As soon as she saw him, she knelt down before him, and said, " Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." And then she burst into tears, and her friend felt very sorry for her. He wept. And he

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said, "Show me where they have laid him."

They took him to the grave. He told them to take away the large stone.

Martha did not want to have the place opened; for the dead body had been in it four days; and she thought it might be offensive. But their friend wished it, and they took away the stone. All stood watching him, and wondering what he was going to do.

Then he spoke very loudly, and said, "Lazarus, come forth."

And he, who had been dead, came forth out of the cave.

They took off his grave clothes; and he went home with his sisters,

and talked, and ate, and drank with them, as he used to do. He was alive, and well. Their friend had made him so. (See John xi.)

Who was this friend? *It was Jesus.*

He often did such things. Almost every day he made sick people well. He enabled blind people to see, deaf people to hear, and lame people to walk, by just speaking a few words to them.

But how could he do all this? I never heard of any man who could make the wind cease to blow, or who could cure sick people, by only speaking; or who could make dead people to live again. No; but Je-

sus could, because he was God. Jesus Christ was God. (John i. 1.)

My faith shall triumph o'er the grave
And trample on the tombs :
My Jesus, my Redeemer, lives,
My God, my Saviour, comes :
Ere long I know he shall appear
In power and glory great,
And Death, the last of all his foes,
Lie vanquish'd at his feet.

Then, though the worms my flesh devour
And make my form their prey,
I know I shall arise with power
On the last judgment-day :
When God shall stand upon the earth,
Him there mine eyes shall see ;
My flesh shall feel a second birth,
And ever with him be.

Then his own hand shall wipe the tears
From every weeping eye,
And pains and groans, and griefs and fears,
Shall cease eternally.
How long, dear Saviour, oh, how long
Shall this bright hour delay ?
Oh, hasten thy appearance, Lord,
And bring the welcome day.

CHAPTER III.

JESUS was alive long before any thing was made. He made the world; the sky, the trees, the birds, and beasts, and every thing. Then he lived in heaven, with God; he was the Son of God; he was God. (John i. 1—3.)

But he came down from heaven to earth; he became a little, weak, helpless babe. He was Mary's little infant, as I told you just now. (John i. 14.) And he grew up, and was a good and gentle child. He grew bigger, and was a man

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He ate and slept, like other men. But he was a poor, sorrowful man. He was often sad, and sometimes he even groaned and cried. (Phil. ii. 5—8. Isa. liii. 3.)

But why did he come down from heaven? He was very glorious and happy there. Why did he come upon the earth, and make himself a poor, despised man?

O, children, he came to suffer, instead of us, for the wicked things we have done. He came to bear our punishment for us. He came to *redeem us*. Jesus is *our Redeemer*. (Isa. liii. 5. 1 Tim. i. 15. Luke i. 68. Gal. iii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.)

But *how* was he punished instead of us? What was done to him?

He was not sent to hell, for ever, was he? No. I will tell you part of what he suffered for the sins that we have done. (See Matt. xxv. xxvi. xxvii. Mark xiv. xv. Luke xxii. xxiii. John xviii. xix.)

There was a beautiful garden in the country where he lived. It was shaded with large, tall, handsome trees. A brook ran close by it. It was a private place, though within sight of the noisy and dusty city. People often went to that cool, pleasant garden, to be quiet and happy.

But there was a person there, one evening, who could not be happy then. He was kneeling among the shady trees; flowers were around him, wet with the dews of night; but his

sighs and groans showed that he was full of sorrow. Yes, he was so very, very sorrowful, that great drops, like blood, burst from his forehead, and fell down to the ground.

Who was he? and what was the matter? *It was Jesus.* He was suffering for us!

He rose from his knees, and went to three friends of his, who were near him. He had asked them to watch with him; but, instead of watching, they had all fallen asleep. He awoke them. At first they could hardly rouse themselves; but soon they were wide awake, and sprang up; for they heard a loud, mingled noise of many footsteps, and many

angry voices ; and they saw a great crowd of people, with lanterns and flaming torches, coming towards them. One walked before the others, and seemed to be showing them the way. They had heavy sticks in their hands, and sharp swords, which flashed in the light of their flaming torches ; and they seemed to be looking for somebody.

Jesus walked forward to meet them.

The man who was leading the crowd was Judas ; one who had known Jesus many years ; who had lived with him, and travelled about with him ; and had seen the kind and wonderful things he had done. As soon as he was near to Jesus, he

went to him, and kissed him Was that because he loved him?

O, no! Judas had said to the crowd of fierce and cruel people, when they set out on their cruel business, "I will show you where he is: I will kiss him; and you will know that the man I kiss is Jesus, and then you can seize him." So, as soon as Judas had kissed him, they came around Jesus, and took hold of him.

Then all his friends ran away, and left him there.

However, the men did not hurt him. They were only a company who had been sent, by the cruel rulers, to bring Jesus to them. These rulers hated him, and wanted

to have him killed. They were called scribes and priests. So Jesus' hands were tied together, and he was dragged along, in the midst of the crowd, to the house of Annas, one of the priests.

Annas sent quickly to tell the others that Jesus was caught. And they all met together, in a large, open hall, and had him brought there to them.

And, now they had got him, they were determined to have him killed. But they did not want to be thought murderers; so they tried to show that he had done some wicked thing for which he deserved to be killed.

They persuaded many persons to stand up before all the people, and say

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he had done very bad things, which he never did at all. At last the high priest turned to Jesus himself, and asked him if he was the Son of God.

Jesus said he was, and that they would all see him, at some future day, coming in the clouds of heaven.

Then they cried out that it was very wicked in him to say so; and that he deserved to be killed, if it was only for saying such a wicked thing as that. And then they struck him on the face; and even the servants began to beat him with their fists, and the people that stood round made sport of him.

And had he not one friend with him all the while? Yes! Two of his friends had turned back from the rest, and followed after him, and had

gone into the priest's house, to see what would become of him. Their names were John and Peter. But when Peter found how the scribes hated Jesus, and how angry and cruel they were, he was afraid; and, instead of coming near him, and standing by him, he stayed at the other end of the hall. And when some one asked him if he was a friend of Jesus, he said he was not; and when they asked him the same question, again and again, he was angry, and began to curse and to swear, and declared that he did not even know the man. And Jesus heard him say so; and how must he have felt about it! Not angry; but very, very sorry. He turned and looked on Peter.

CHAPTER III.

BUT this is not all that Jesus suffered for us. The priests and scribes dared not kill him themselves; but they led him to the house of Pilate, to get him to do it for them. Pilate was a rich and powerful man, who hired many soldiers. It was very early in the morning, when the crowd of priests and scribes stood in front of Pilate's handsome house, and sent Jesus in to him.

Pilate came out to ask what harm Jesus had done. Then they told some more false stories about him;

and Pilate went in to question Jesus. But the more he talked with him, the more certain he was that Jesus had not done any thing wrong.

And he went out, and told them so, and asked them if he should not let him go quietly away. But they, and all the people who had been coming round, cried out, "No, no : Kill him ! kill him !"

Pilate thought that, perhaps, if Jesus should be beaten, they would think that was enough, and would be willing to let him go. So he called his soldiers ; and they took Jesus into another room, and beat him most cruelly, on the back, with rods that made the blood run out every time they struck him.

And when they had done beating him, they began to mock and insult him. They dressed him in an old purple robe, and made a crown of thorns, and stuck it on his head; and they put a long stick in his hand; and then they knelt before him, and pretended to honour him.

All this they did, to make sport of him, and try to vex him. But he bore it all in silence; he did not say a word. At last they snatched the stick from his hand, and beat him on the head with it; yes, they drove the sharp thorns into his head.

Then Pilate said to the angry crowd of people in the street, "I will bring him out to you, that you

may know that I find no fault in him."

Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns, and the old purple dress, and bleeding from the beating he had received.

Pilate pointed to him, and said, "*Behold the man.*"

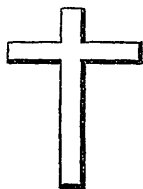
But the scribes and priests did not feel sorry for him; they did not mind what Pilate all the time told them, that Jesus had done nothing wrong. They cried out, "Crucify him! crucify him!"

And, at last, Pilate was really afraid; there were so many of them, and they were in such a rage. So he said, "Take him, then, and crucify him."

CHAPTER IV.

THEN Pilate sent soldiers with them, and they led Jesus away to crucify him. You will soon know what that means; for I am going to tell you how they crucified Jesus.

They got a piece of wood, longer than the height of a man, and fastened another shorter piece of wood across the top of it, so as to make a thing like this:



It was a cross. Then they took Jesus, as he was—all weak and faint—and ordered him to carry this heavy cross, upon his back, up a hill, to the place where he was to be crucified.

And he did drag it some distance. But at last he sunk down under the weight, and they had to get some one to help him.

When they came to the place, they laid the cross on the ground; and then they took off most of his clothes, and laid Jesus on the cross, and stretched out his arms along the piece of wood at the top. And then one soldier held his hand open, and another took a great nail, and a

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heavy hammer, and, oh! he drove the nail quite through the hand of Jesus into the wood! Then he nailed the other hand fast in the same way; and then drove a nail through his feet. And then they dug a hole in the ground; and, raising the cross upright, they let the lower end fall down, very hard, into the hole; and then they threw the dirt around it, so as to plant it like a tree. And, all the while, Jesus was hanging on it, by the great nails which were driven through his hands and feet.

Yes, there he hung for three hours—three long, painful hours! The aching, burning smart of his torn hands and feet became worse

and worse, till he felt it all along his limbs. As he could not move at all, his body soon ached all over. He grew sick, and faint, and thirsty. And, worse than all, his thoughts within him were very bitter, and he was very sorrowful.

But all who passed by laughed at his misery, and shook their heads; and some told him to help himself, and to come down from the cross, if he could.

Even then he prayed to God to forgive them.—His words were, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”

At last his agony became too great to bear. And sinking under it, he

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said, "It is finished," and he groaned, and died.

Yes, then his sufferings for us were finished; he had finished the great work of redeeming us. All this he bore, and thus he died, for our wickedness.

Christ has borne the punishment instead of us. He is our Redeemer. (Job xix. 25. Isa. liii. 5, 6. 1 Cor. xv. 3. Eph. i. 7. 1 Thess. v. 10. 1 Pet. ii. 21. 24.)

If he had not redeemed us, God must have been angry with us for ever. But since Christ has suffered and died for our wickedness, God may be kind to us, and he is. You know he treats us kindly now; and he may quite forgive us, and keep

us from going to hell, and take us, when we die, to the holy and happy place where he lives, and where Jesus is now living. He may do so, because Jesus has redeemed us. (John iii. 16—18. Rom. iii. 24; viii. 1.)

O, was it not kind in God to give us a redeemer? Was it not very kind in God the Son to come and be a man and suffer for us, and be our Redeemer?

Have you disobeyed such a good God, such a kind Redeemer? Have you done things he forbids you to do? O how wicked, how ungrateful! But God will forgive you. Jesus died to save you from your sins. He can hear you anywhere; and he will forgive you, if you are really

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sorry and penitent, and if you will always try to please and mind him in every way. (John xvi. 23.)

But if you are not sorry, and will not obey him, he will not forgive you. (Luke xiii. 3.)

But I hope you will be sorry for all your sins. I hope you will love Jesus, and make him your friend. I hope you will try always to please and mind him. Will you not?

If you ask God, he will cause you to feel and act in this way. Ask him to do this for you; and begin now to try; for you surely ought to be a good, obedient child to such a kind, heavenly Father.

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